

*The*  
**Proverbs of Solomon**

---

IN VERSE

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By Rev. Indole Myers, B. A.



**The  
Proverbs  
of  
Solomon**



משלי שלמה

The  
Proverbs of Solomon  
OR  
The Words of the Wise

---

IN VERSE

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Translated from the Massoretic Text  
of the Hebrew Bible

BY  
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Author of  
*"Gems from the Talmud," etc.*

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1912



*Copyright, 1911,*  
**By ISIDORE MYERS**





Dedicated  
To My Wife  
In Devotion and Admiration

*"Though many daughters have done well,  
Yet all of them thou dost excel."*  
*Proverbs: 31-29.*



## PREFACE

**T**HE BOOK OF PROVERBS is the oldest, simplest and the most popular of the three books in the Bible belonging to the Wisdom Literature which emanated from the ancient Wise Men of Israel. Having Wisdom for its theme, based upon the reverence of God, thoroughly human in tone and character, and concerned with the whole range of human life and conduct, the Book of Proverbs, whose authorship an admiring posterity ascribed to King Solomon, has continued to be of general interest to the present day.

Curiously enough the Proverbs, though clothed in a poetic garb in the original, following a perfect system of versification, have never before appeared in a metrical form in English. It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I now offer this versified and rhymed translation made from the original Hebrew Massoretic text, feeling assured that this novel and appropriate setting will appeal and commend itself to a large number of the reading public. I may add that it has been my endeavor to employ the simplest language and to make the translation as accurate and as literal as possible.

For most of the headings, the arrangement of lines for metrical and rhetorical reasons, and for other points that I have made use of, I am greatly indebted to the Modern

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Reader's Bible, (*Copyright, the Macmillan Company, New York*), to the Publishers of which I extend my sincere thanks for their courtesy.

To Professor Richard G. Moulton, M. A., Ph. D., of the Chicago University, the famous Editor of the Modern Reader's Bible, from whose masterly Introduction and Notes I have derived much benefit, I feel deeply grateful for having obtained from his Publishers permission for me "to help myself" to the Modern Reader's *Proverbs*, *Psalms* and *Job*. For this I cordially thank him, as well as for the kind words of encouragement which he was good enough to convey to me after reading a copy of this translation of the Proverbs.

My grateful thanks are also tendered to my friend, Mr. John S. McGroarty, of Los Angeles, Editor of the "West Coast Magazine", and author of "Wander Songs" and other poetical works, who generously helped me in the revision of the "proof".

Complimentary advance notices of this work have appeared in several papers, including a lengthy sympathetic review in the *New York World*, which I duly and gratefully appreciate.

The publication of this book has, I regret to say, been long delayed through various unforeseen circumstances, culminating in the destruction of the set-up type in the conflagration of the Los Angeles "Times" Building on

## PREFACE

October 1st, 1910, when the book was about to be printed. Luckily a duplicate of the translation itself was in my possession. The further delay gave me the chance of again carefully revising and improving it, as well as of re-writing some of the matter that had been destroyed. My metrical translations of the *Psalms* and of *Job* have been meanwhile completed, which I trust will not stay in their unpublished form as long as this work has had to remain.

It is my sincere hope that this metrical version of the Proverbs will extend to wider and wider circles the interest of the didactic poetry of that book of the Sacred Literature which emphatically teaches to all men of all times that—

*Goodness to Wisdom closely is allied,  
And Vice with Folly is identified.*

ISIDORE MYERS.

Los Angeles, February 24th, 1912.

***"The Words of the Wise are as goads,  
And as nails that are firmly fastened  
Are the words of Collectors of Sayings."***

***(Ecclesiastes, xii.11.)***

***"Do not despise the Proverb, for the Saw  
Strengthens in men the teachings of the Law."***

***(Midrash, Song of Songs, I.)***

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BOOK I.

*Appeal of Wisdom.*



## CHAPTER 1.

*The Title.*

- 1 The Proverbs of Solomon,  
The Son of David, King of Israel.

*Aim and Purpose of the Work.*

- 2 That men may Wisdom and Instruction learn:  
The Words of Reason they may thus discern:
- 3 Instruction in Wise Dealing to possess,  
In Justice, Equity and Uprightness:
- 4 Give Prudence unto men of Simple Heart,  
Knowledge and Tact unto the Young impart:
- 5 The Wise man, hearing, may more Learning gain,  
The Man of Sense to Counsels Sound attain:
- 6 Proverbs and Maxims Deep to understand,  
The Words and Riddles of the Sages' Band.

*Key-note or Motto of the Work.**Religion the Foundation of Knowledge.*

- 7 TRUE KNOWLEDGE FROM THE FEAR OF GOD DOTH RISE:  
BUT WISDOM AND INSTRUCTION FOOLS DESPISE.

*Obedience to Parents.*

- 8    Thy sire's instruction hear, my son,  
       Thy mother's teaching do not shun:  
 9    They'll be a wreath of grace to deck  
       Thine head, and chains around thy neck.

*The Company of Sinners.*

- 10   If sinners tempt thee to do ill,  
       My son, do not incline thy will.  
 11   Yea, if they should address thee thus,  
       "Do thou consent to come with us,  
       Let us lay wait, on bloodshed bent,  
       Lurk, without risk, for the innocent;

- 12 Let us, indeed, e'en as Sheol,  
Swallow them up alive and whole,  
Yea, as completely e'en as it  
Were those that sink into the pit;  
13 All precious substance find we will,  
Our houses we with spoil shall fill;  
14 Thy lot shall be among us thrown,  
And all of us one purse shall own:"  
15 To walk with them, my son, ne'er deign,  
But from their path thy foot refrain:  
16 Because their feet run to do ill,  
They hasten only blood to spill.  
17 For, as in vain the net spread out  
Lies in the sight of birds, no doubt,  
18 And they for their own blood lay wait,  
Lurk for their own life's mortal fate:  
19 So are the ways of each who fain  
Would get through greed unlawful gain;  
For in the end, it brings dismay,  
And takes its owner's life away.

*Wisdom's Cry of Warning.*

- 20 Aloud doth Wisdom cry outside,  
Lifteth her voice in places wide;



- 21    Calls at the head of noisy streets,  
      By open gates the people greets,  
      And in the town her words repeats:
- 22    “How long, ye simple ones, will ye  
      Love and pursue simplicity?  
      Scoffers in scoffing find delight,  
      And fools will knowledge hate and slight?
- 23    Turn but at my reproof, and, lo,  
      On you my spirit I’ll bestow,  
      Yea, then my words I’ll make you know
- 24    Because I called, but ye declined,  
      I waved mine hand, but none would mind;
- 25    Ye from my counsel stood aloof,  
      And have rejected my reproof:
- 26    I’ll laugh at your misfortune, too,  
      I’ll mock when fear shall come to you;
- 27    When as a storm shall come your fear,  
      As whirlwinds shall your woe draw near;  
      When anguish and distress appear.
- 28    Then, though they should upon me call,  
      I shall not answer them at all;  
      To seek me truly though inclined,  
      Yet me they never then shall find.
- 29    Because they knowledge did refuse,  
      The fear of God they did not choose;

- 30 But from my counsel stood aloof,  
And did despise all my reproof:  
31 They'll eat the fruit their way of ill  
Produces, and themselves they will  
With all their own devices fill.  
32 For Simpletons are doomed to be  
Slain by their own perversity,  
And careless ease which Fools enjoy  
Shall ultimately them destroy.
- 33 But whoso hearkens unto me  
Shall dwell in safe security,  
E'er from the dread of evil free."
- 

## CHAPTER 2.

### *Wisdom Delivers From Evil.*

- 1 If thou receive my words, if thou,  
My son, lay up my precepts now;  
2 That thou thine ear to Wisdom lend,  
Thine heart to Understanding bend;  
3 Yea, if for Reason thou wilt cry,  
And raise thy voice for Prudence high,

- 4    And, as for silver, search for her,  
    As if she hidden treasures were:
- 5    The Fear, then, of the Lord shall be  
    Well understood, indeed, by thee,  
    Also of God the Knowledge sound  
    Full surely shall by thee be found.
- 6    For God gives wisdom; sense, indeed,  
    And knowledge from His mouth proceed.
- 7    Sound wisdom's for the Just concealed,  
    For those that upright walk, a shield;
- 8    To guard the paths of equity,  
    And His Saints' way preserve may He.
- 9    Then Justice shall be known by thee,  
    And Uprightness and Equity;  
    Yea, known each noble path shall be.
- 10   Thou in thine heart shalt Wisdom greet,  
    Knowledge shall to thy soul be sweet;
- 11   Discretion, too, shall watch o'er thee,  
    And Prudence shall thy safeguard be.
- 12   'Twill save thee from the Evil Way,  
    From men who froward things do say,
- 13   Who do forsake the paths of Right,  
    To walk in ways as dark as night;
- 14   Delight in doing evil still,  
    Joy in the frowardness of ill;

- 15 Whose paths are crooked all their days,  
Who are perverse in all their ways.  
16 It also shall deliver thee  
From the Strange Woman, e'en when she  
Employs her words of flattery;  
17 Her youth's companion she forsakes,  
God's covenant she forgets and breaks:  
18 Her house inclines to Death, indeed,  
Unto the Dead her paths to lead:  
19 Her visitors ne'er return again,  
Nor to the paths of life attain.
- 20 Walk in the Way of Good Men, then,  
And keep the paths of righteous men.  
21 For in the land the upright stay,  
The perfect there remain alway;  
22 The wicked thence cut off shall be,  
Uprooted, men of treachery.
- 

### CHAPTER 3.

#### *The Commandment and the Reward.*

- 1 Lose not, my son, what I impart,  
But keep my precepts in thine heart.  
2 Long days, and years of life, and peace,  
They'll surely unto thee increase.

- 3 Let Truth and Mercy leave thee ne'er:  
To bind them round thy neck take care;  
On thine heart's tablet write them e'er:
- 4 So Grace and good Repute thou'lt find  
Both in God's sight and of mankind.
- 5 With all thine heart put confidence  
In God, lean not on thine own sense:
- 6 Acknowledge Him in all thy ways;  
He'll smooth thy paths throughout thy days.
- 7 Oh be not wise in thine own eyes;  
Fear God and turn from evil guise:
- 8 Thus for thy frame shall health abound,  
And marrow for thy bones be found.
- 9 God with thy wealth be honoring,  
And thy first fruits unto Him bring:
- 10 With plenty filled thy barns shall grow,  
And with new wine thy vats o'erflow.

*Wisdom the Supreme Prize.*

- 11 Do not despise the chastening rod,  
My son, and the reproof of God:
- 12 For whom God loveth He reproves,  
As father does the son he loves.

- 13 Happy the man that wisdom gains,  
And prudence for himself obtains.
- 14 For surely doth her trafficking  
A greater profit ever bring  
Than that of silver bought and sold,  
And her great gain excels fine gold.
- 15 More precious she than rubies rare,  
And naught which thou canst wish is there  
That ever can with her compare.
- 16 In her right hand is length of days,  
In her left, wealth with honor stays.
- 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
And all her paths do peace possess;
- 18 A tree of life is she alway  
To them that hold upon her lay:  
Happy is each of those that deign  
To seek her ever to retain.
- 19 God founded earth by wisdom's aid,  
The heavens by understanding made.
- 20 The depths were by His knowledge, too,  
Burst forth, the skies drop down the dew.

*Wisdom and Security.*

- 21 My son, let them not leave thine eyes,  
Discretion keep and Counsel wise;

- 22 In them Life to thy soul thou'lt see,  
And Grace unto thy neck they'll be.
- 23 Safe on thy way thou then shalt go,  
No stumbling shall thy foot then know.
24. When lying down thou shalt not dread,  
But sweet shall be thy sleep instead.
- 25 Be not afraid of sudden fear,  
When bad men's ruin draweth near:
- 26 For God thy confidence shall be,  
And keep thy foot uncaught shall He.

*Wisdom and Perversity.*

- 27 Withhold not good from one in need,  
When thou canst do the kindly deed.
- 28 Unto thy neighbor do not say,  
"Go, come again another day,  
And I will give it, I avow,"  
When 'tis in thy possession now.
- 29 Against thy neighbor plan no ill,  
Who dwells by thee securely still.
- 30 Contend with no man causelessly  
If harm he ne'er hath done to thee.
- 31 Ne'er envy those who violence use,  
And of their ways none ever choose.

- 32 The Froward are by God abhorred;  
In upright men confides the Lord.  
33 On bad men's homes God's curse doth rest;  
The dwelling of the Good is blest.  
34 Scorners with scorn He doth abase,  
But to the Lowly He gives grace.  
35 The Wise shall surely honor gain;  
Fools for promotion shame obtain.
- 

## CHAPTER 4.

*The Tradition of Wisdom.*

- 1 A father's teaching, children, hear,  
To know true reason, give ye ear:  
2 Good doctrine you I give to take;  
Do not my teaching e'er forsake.  
3 For to my sire I was a son,  
My mother's tender only one.  
4 Instruction unto me gave he,  
And this is what he said to me:  
Oh let thine heart my Words hold fast;  
My Precepts keep, and live and last:



- 5 Strive Wisdom ever to obtain,  
Strive Understanding e'er to gain;  
  
Forget not, nor reject, indeed,  
The words which from my mouth proceed:  
6 Forsake her not, she'll watch o'er thee;  
Love her, thy safeguard she shall be.  
  
7 Wisdom's first step and surest sign  
Is striving to make Wisdom thine;  
With all that thou hast got, be sure  
Sound Understanding to procure.  
  
8 Do thou exalt her constantly,  
And she will be promoting thee;  
Yea, thee in honor she shall place  
When her, indeed, thou shalt embrace.  
9 Upon thine head she'll surely place  
A splendid crown, a wreath of grace.

*The Two Paths.*

- 10 My son, hear, take these words of mine;  
Shall many years of life be thine.  
11 In Wisdom's way I thee have led;  
The paths of Right I've made thee tread.

- 12 Walking, no step of thine, my son,  
Shall ever be a straightened one,  
Nor shalt thou stumble if thou run.
- 13 Hold fast, let not instruction go:  
Keep her, thy life from her doth flow.
- 14 Thou shall not ever enter then  
Into the path of wicked men;  
And 'long that way be never led,  
Which evil men are wont to tread.
- 15 Shun it, yea, by it do not stray,  
But, turning from it, go thy way.
- 16 For sleep by them is never won,  
Unless some mischief they have done;  
Yea, sleep is stolen from them all,  
Unless they've caused some one to fall.
- 17 They eat the bread of dire offence,  
And drink the wine of violence.
- 18 The path of those that do the right  
Is like the dawn's effulgent light,  
That shines with ever brighter ray  
Until it grows to perfect day.
- 19 The way of godless men is quite  
As dark as is the darkest night:  
They do not realize at all  
Through what they're doomed at last to fall.

*Wisdom and Health.*

- 20 My son, unto my words attend,  
Thine ear unto my sayings bend.
- 21 Ne'er let them from thine eyes depart,  
Preserve them well within thine heart.
- 22 They're Life to them by whom they're found,  
And for their flesh doth Health abound.
- 23 'Bove everything that's guarded, oh,  
Upon thine Heart a watch bestow,  
For thence do all Life's issues flow.
- 24 A Froward Mouth removed shall be,  
And Lips Perverse put far from thee.
- 25 Thine Eyes to look straight forward raise,  
Thine Eyelids let before thee gaze.
- 26 Thy Feet's path ponder carefully,  
Thy Ways aright all ordered be.
- 27 Turn not to right nor left, but still  
Do thou remove thy Foot from ill.

## CHAPTER 5.

*The Strange Woman.*

- 1 Attend, my son, to Wisdom mine;  
To Reason, too, thine ear incline:
- 2 To keep discretion evermore,  
Thy lips preserving learning's store.
- 3 The lips of a Strange Woman do  
E'er drop sweet honey, it is true,  
Smoother than oil her mouth is, too:
- 4 But in the end, oh, thou shalt find  
Bitter as wormwood is her kind;  
Yea, she will prove to be as keen  
As is a two-edged sword, I ween.
- 5 Her feet go down to Death at last;  
Her steps, indeed, Sheol hold fast;
- 6 The path of life lest thou shouldst weigh,  
Thou knowest not her tracks do stray.
- 7 Now, children, hear ye what I say,  
From my mouth's words turn not away.
- 8 Keep far from her thy road e'ermore,  
And come not nigh her dwelling's door:

- 9 Lest thou to others give thy bloom,  
Thy years unto the Cruel doom:
- 10 Lest strangers all thy strength obtain,  
An alien's house thy labors gain;
- 11 Lest thou at last, to mourning doomed,  
Say, when thy body is consumed,
- 12 "Why have I not instruction prized?  
Why hath my heart reproof despised?
- 13 My teachers' voice I would not hear,  
Nor to instructors bent mine ear.
- 14 Amid the public, then, well nigh  
In every misery was I."
- 15 Thy cistern let thy thirst dispel,  
Drink running waters from *thy* well.
- 16 Should then thy springs o'erflow outside,  
And water-streams in places wide?
- 17 Let them belong to thee alone,  
No strangers them with thee shall own.
- 18 Blest be thy fount, and find, in truth,  
Joy in the wife of thine own youth.
- 19 A pleasant doe, a loving hind,  
Assuredly in her thoult find;  
Her breasts e'er satisfying thee,  
With *her* love always ravished be.
- 20 And, oh, my son, why e'er should'st thou  
Be ravished with a wanton? How

- Canst thou e'er make thyself so base  
A stranger's bosom to embrace?  
21 For man's ways are before God's eyes,  
Who all his paths doth scrutinize.
- 22 By those ill deeds which he hath wrought  
Sure is the godless to be caught,  
Yea, with his own sin's cords at last,  
He surely shall be holden fast.
- 23 Because he lacked instruction true,  
He shall be doomed to die; and through  
The greatness of his folly's way,  
He shall be doomed to go astray.
- 

## CHAPTER 6.

### *Suretyship.*

- 1 If thou'st, my son, agreed to be  
E'er for thy neighbor surety,  
Thine hand for strangers struck by thee,  
2 Then into snares thou hast been led,  
Thou'rt caught by what thy mouth hath said.

- 3 Do this, my son, to save thee now,  
Since in thy neighbor's hand art thou:  
Go, and before him humble thee,  
And with thy neighbor urgent be.
- 4 No sleep unto thine eyes be given,  
Be slumber from thine eyelids driven.
- 5 As roe from hunter's hand would be,  
And bird from fowler's hand, get free.

*The Sluggard.*

- 6 Unto the Ant, thou Sluggard, go,  
Regard her ways, and wise thus grow:
- 7 No chief nor guide doth she possess,  
Nor overseer, who, ne'ertheless,
- 8 Her meat in summer doth provide,  
Gathers her food at harvest-tide.
- 9 How long wilt thou lie sluggard-wise?  
When from thy sleep wilt thou arise?
- 10 "A little sleep and slumber yet,  
Folding of hands more sleep to get—"
- 11 So, like a wayfarer, on thee  
Shall quickly come thy poverty,  
And shall thy want be drawing near  
As swift as men in arms appear.

*Worthless Persons.*

- 12 A man of dire iniquity,  
A worthless wight is found to be,—  
With mouth distorted walketh he;
- 13 Winks with his eyes, speaks with his feet,  
Points with his fingers in the street;
- 14 Within his heart Deception lies,  
Mischief he ever doth devise,  
He causes Discord to arise.
- 15 And therefore suddenly shall he  
Meet with his dire calamity;  
He shall be broken unaware,  
With naught to heal him anywhere.
- 16 Six things are hated by the Lord,  
Yea, seven are by Him abhorr'd:
- 17 Proud Looks, a Lying Tongue, the Ill  
Of hands that guiltless blood do spill;
- 18 Hearts hatching many an Evil Thought,  
Feet swift for Mischief to be wrought;
- 19 False witnesses that utter lies,  
And he who doth in evil guise  
Cause Strife 'twixt brethren to arise.



*The Supreme Folly.*

- 20 Thy sire's command keep thou, my son,  
Thy mother's teaching do not shun:
- 21 E'er on thine heart let them be bound,  
And tie them fast thy neck around.
- 22 Thee, walking, it shall guide and keep;  
'Twill watch o'er thee when thou dost sleep;  
And when thou, too, shalt wakened be,  
It shall, indeed, converse with thee.
- 23 For the Commandment is a bright  
And glorious lamp, the Law is light;  
Reproofs that chasten are, indeed,  
The way which unto Life doth lead:
- 24 To keep thee from the Woman vile,  
Another's wife with tongue of guile.
- 25 A lusting for her beauty be  
Far from thine heart perpetually,  
Nor let her eyelids capture thee.
- 26 For being by a Harlot led  
A man's brought to a piece of bread:  
And the Adulteress snares doth lay  
To take the precious life away.

- 27 Can in his lap a man take fire,  
Without thus burning his attire?
- 28 Or can one walk on coals red hot,  
And yet his feet thus scorched be not?
- 29 So is it, too, with him in life  
Who goes in to his neighbor's wife;  
Whoever dares to touch her, he  
Shall surely not unpunished be.
- 30 Men do not scorn a thief, who steals  
To fill his soul that hungry feels;
- 31 Yet, found, he payeth sevenfold,  
Gives all the wealth his house doth hold.
- 32 Of understanding void is he,  
Who doth commit adultery;  
He only doeth such a thing,  
Who would his life to ruin bring.
- 33 Wounds and Dishonor he'll obtain,  
And naught will wipe away his stain.
- 34 For rage from Jealousy doth flow,  
And in the day of vengeance, lo,  
A man no pity e'er will show.
- 35 No ransom e'en regard will he;  
Neither content will he e'er be,  
Though many gifts be giv'n by thee.

## CHAPTER 7.

*The Strange Woman.*

- 1 My words, my son, be kept by thee,  
With thee my precepts treasured be.
- 2 Keep my Commands and do not die;  
My Law, as the apple of thine eye.
- 3 To bind them on thy fingers deign;  
On thine heart's tablet write them plain.
- 4 "My Sister, thou" to Wisdom say,  
And Reason call thy Kin alway:
- 5 So that they may throughout thy life  
Protect thee from another's wife,  
From the Strange Woman keep thee free  
That useth words of flattery.
- 6 For at my window I did view,  
And, looking forth my lattice through,
- 7 I saw the simple ones among,  
Discerned, amid the youthful throng,  
A senseless youth that walked along,
- 8 And through the street her corner nigh,  
The way to her abode did hie;
- 9 At eve, at twilight, walked the wight,  
Yea, in the darkness of black night;

- 10 And, lo, a Woman he did meet,  
With Harlot's dress, heart of conceit,
- 11 Of noise and wilfulness possessed;  
Within her house her feet ne'er rest;  
12 Now in the streets, now in the square,  
She lurks at corners everywhere.  
13 So him she seized, and him did kiss,  
And with a shameless face said this:  
14 "Peace-offerings once I vowed to pay;  
My vows I have discharged this day;  
15 To meet thee, then, I forth did bound,  
To seek thy face, and thee I've found.  
16 With tapestries my couch I've spread,  
With covers of Egyptian thread;  
17 I have perfumed and sprinkled on  
My bed myrrh, aloes, cinnamon.  
18 Let's take our fill of love all night,  
In fond caresses find delight.  
19 The man is not at home with me,  
For a long journey gone is he:  
20 A moneybag he took away;  
He will come home on a fixed day."
- 21 She made him yield with all her say,  
With flattering lips forced him away.

- 22 As oxen to the slaughter, so  
Straightway he after her doth go,  
Or as the fettered to the school  
Where chastisement awaits the fool;  
23 Until at last an arrow, too,  
Doth strike his liver through and through;  
As a bird hasteth to the snare,  
And he is not at all aware  
That for his life it lieth there.
- 24 Now, children, hearken unto me,  
And to my words attentive be.  
25 Thine heart incline not to her way,  
And in her paths go not astray.  
26 For many dead she's caused to fall:  
Yea, numerous are her slain in all.  
27 Ways to Sheol her house doth show,  
And to Death's chambers down they go.
- 

## CHAPTER 8.

*The Excellence of Wisdom.*

- 1 Wisdom, in truth, aloud doth cry,  
Her voice doth Prudence lift up high;

- 2 On lofty places raised she stays,  
Stands by the road, where meet the ways;  
3 Yea, by the city gates she roars,  
Cries at the entrance at the doors:
- 4 O sons of men, to you I call;  
I raise my voice to one and all.  
5 Ye simple ones, sage prudence learn;  
And with your heart, ye fools, discern.  
6 Hear, for of noble things I speak;  
Right things my lips to utter seek.  
7 My mouth, indeed, shall truth express,  
My lips abhor all wickedness.
- 8 My words with righteousness replete,  
Are free from cunning and deceit.  
9 They're plain to the discerning mind,  
And right to them that knowledge find.  
10 Not silver, but my lore uphold;  
Get knowledge rather than choice gold.  
11 Better than rubies Wisdom's e'er;  
Naught precious can with her compare.
- 12 I, Wisdom, do with Prudence dwell,  
Sagacious plans I find out well.

- 13 True Fear of God is that which will  
Lead you to hate whate'er is ill;  
I hate all Pride and Evil Guise,  
The mouth perverse I do despise.
- 14 Counsel is mine and Knowledge sound;  
I'm Reason, Strength with me is found.
- 15 Monarchs their sceptres wield by me,  
Rulers just laws by me decree;
- 16 Princes and Nobles thus command,  
E'en all the Judges of the land.
- 17 To love my lovers I'm inclined;  
Who seek me truly, me shall find.
- 18 Riches and Glory are with me,  
Enduring Wealth, Prosperity;
- 19 Better than gold my Fruits accrue,  
Even fine gold surpassing, too,  
Than silver choice, my Revenue.
- 20 The path of Right I ever tread,  
Along the tracks of Justice led;
- 21 Substance to let my friends possess,  
Their treasures I'll fill and bless.

- 22 God got me ere His works began,  
The first in all creation's plan.
- 23 From everlasting was my birth,  
Yea, from the first, before the earth.
- 24 Ere there were deeps I was begot,  
When water-laden springs were not.
- 25 I was brought forth before, as yet,  
The hills and mountains had been set;
- 26 Ere He the land and wastes had made,  
Ere He the world's first dust had laid.
- 27 When He prepared the heavens new,  
And on the face a circle drew  
Of the vast deep, there I was, too:
- 28 When skies above He firm did frame:  
When the deep's fountains strong became:
- 29 When to the sea its bounds He set,  
So that its waters ne'er should get  
Beyond its borders, and when He  
Marked out what should earth's bases be:
- 30 I, as His foster child, did stay  
With Him, delighting Him each day,  
And in His presence e'er did play,
- 31 Exulting at His world in sight;  
The sons of men were my delight.



- 32 Now, children, hearken unto me:  
Who keep my ways they blest shall be.
- 33 Instruction hear ye and be wise,  
Yea, no instruction e'er despise.
- 34 Happy the man that heeds my say,  
That watches at my gates each day,  
That at my door-posts waits alway.
- 35 For he that findeth me finds Life;  
He'll from the Lord get favor rife;
- 36 But he that misses me, the goal,  
Does violence to his own soul;  
Yea, Death is courted by all those  
That hate me ever as my foes.
- 

## CHAPTER 9.

### *Wisdom and Folly.*

- 1 Her house hath Wisdom builded new,  
Hewn out her seven pillars, too:
- 2 Hath killed her fatlings, mixed her wine,  
Her table set in order fine.

- 3 She hath her maids sent far and nigh,  
And on the city's places high,  
She thus aloud doth ever cry:
- 4 "Whoever simple is, indeed,  
Let him turn hither in with speed."  
And to him, too, that's void of sense,  
She saith from her high eminence:
- 5 "Come eat ye of my bread, and do  
Drink of the wine I've mixed for you.
- 6 Folly forsake, that live ye may,  
And forward go in Reason's way."
- 7 He that corrects a Scoffer gets  
Shame to himself amid regrets:  
To chide the wicked who doth deign,  
Upon himself he brings a stain.
- 8 Do not reprove a Scoffer, or  
He'll come to hate you all the more.  
Reprove a Wise man, and you're sure  
His love and favor to secure.
- 9 Instruct a Wise man, and he will  
Become in this way wiser still;  
Yea, teach a Good man, and his store  
Of learning will increase the more.
- 10 Wisdom's beginning, true and sound,  
Is in the Fear of God e'er found:

- And knowledge of the Holy One  
Is Understanding well begun.
- 11    “Thy days shall numerous grow through me,  
      Thy years of life increased shall be.”
- 12    Lo, if in Wisdom thou dost rise,  
      Thou for thyself art surely wise;  
      And if to scoff thou art all prone  
      Then thou shalt bear it all alone.
- 13    The foolish Woman’s clamorous, lo,  
      Simple is she, naught doth she know;
- 14    There at the door, she thinketh fit,  
      Of her own house, indeed, to sit,  
      Yea, on a seat she sitteth down  
      In the high places of the town,
- 15    To call to those that do pass by,  
      Who in their ways straight forward hie:
- 16    “Whoever simple is, indeed,  
      Let him turn hither in with speed.”  
      And to him, too, that’s void of sense  
      She saith from her high eminence:
- 17    “Lo, sweet are stolen waters, food,  
      In secret, pleasant is and good.”
- 18    He knows not that the Shades are there;  
      In Sheol’s depths her guests are e’er.



BOOK II.

*Disconnected Proverbs.*

*First Collection.*



## CHAPTER 10.

*The Proverbs of Solomon.*

- 1 A son that's wise affords his father joy:  
A mother's sorrow is a foolish boy.
- 2 No profit do ill gotten stores possess:  
But sure to save from death is Righteousness.
- 3 A good man's soul God lets not famished be:  
But bad men's cravings disappointeth He.
- 4 Who works with slothful hand, he poor doth grow:  
The hand of diligent men doth wealth bestow.
- 5 In summer gathereth a son that's wise:  
One causing shame, asleep in harvest lies.
- 6 Upon the good man's head do blessings fall:  
But bad men's mouths shall violence cover all.
- 7 The memory of the Good is blest for aye:  
But the name of the Wicked shall decay.
- 8 Precepts the Wise in heart receive alone:  
The foolish Prater shall be overthrown.

- 9 He'll go secure that walketh uprightly;  
He that perverts his ways chastised shall be.
- 10 He causeth grief who winketh with the eye:  
And prostrate shall a foolish Prater lie.
- 11 Behold a good man's mouth! Life flows from thence:  
The mouth of bad men hideth violence.
- 12 Hatred is wont to stir up strifes, but, lo,  
Over all wrongs doth Love a cover throw.
- 13 Wisdom is found on lips where Prudence rules:  
A rod is for the back of senseless Fools.
- 14 On laying knowledge up the Wise are bent:  
The Fool's mouth makes disaster imminent.
- 15 The rich man's wealth his stronghold proves to be:  
The poor man's ruin is his Poverty.
- 16 The labor of the Good to life doth tend:  
The fruit of wicked men in sin doth end.
- 17 Who heeds Instruction is of life a way:  
He that forsakes Reproof doth lead astray.



- 18 Who Hatred hides has lips by falsehood led:  
A Fool is he who slanderous tales doth spread.
- 19 No multitude of words from Sin is free:  
But who his lips restraineth, wise is he.
- 20 A Good man's tongue as silver choice we prize:  
To little worth the hearts of Bad men rise.
- 21 The lips of Righteous men do many feed:  
The Foolish die for lack of sense, indeed.
- 22 It is God's Blessing that makes rich and glad:  
And naught thereto can painful labor add.
- 23 'Tis sport to Fools to do a grave offence:  
And so is Wisdom to a man of sense.
- 24 Upon the Wicked cometh what they fear:  
But what the Good desire doth soon appear.
- 25 The whirlwind gone, the Bad man leaves no trace:  
The Good man is an everlasting base.
- 26 As vinegar to teeth, and smoke to eyes,  
So to his senders is the Sluggards' guise.

- 27 A man's days are increased if God he fears:  
But of the Wicked shortened are the years.
- 28 The hope of Righteous men with joy is fraught:  
But Bad men's expectations come to naught.
- 29 A Stronghold to the Upright is God's way:  
To those that work iniquity—Dismay.
- 30 The Righteous man unmoved shall ever stand:  
The Wicked shall not dwell within the land.
- 31 A Good man's mouth true wisdom doth express:  
Cut off shall be the tongue of Frowardness.
- 32 A Good man's lips what is acceptable know:  
The mouths of Wicked men perverseness show.
- 

## CHAPTER 11.

- 1 False Balances are e'er by God abhorred:  
But in a perfect Weight delights the Lord.
- 2 When Pride arrives, there cometh shame as well:  
But with the Lowly, Wisdom loves to dwell.

- 3 Led by integrity the Upright go:  
But their own cunning lays the Faithless low.
- 4 Wealth in the day of wrath ne'er profiteth:  
But Righteousness is sure to save from Death.
- 5 A good man's Righteousness makes smooth his way:  
By his ill deeds the Bad man falls a prey.
- 6 Their virtue saves the Just from evil dire:  
Caught are the Faithless by their own desire.
- 7 His hope shall perish when a Bad man dies:  
The expectation based on strength soon flies.
- 8 Safe out of trouble is the Righteous led:  
And, lo, the Wicked cometh in his stead.
- 9 The Godless with their mouth lay others low:  
Through knowledge are the Righteous saved from  
woe.
- 10 When Good men prosper doth the town rejoice:  
When Bad men perish rings the joyful voice.
- 11 The blessing of the Just exalts a town:  
The mouth of Wicked men doth pull it down.

- 12 Who scorns his neighbor is devoid of sense:  
He holds his peace who hath intelligence. -
- 13 The Tale-bearer loves a secret to reveal:  
The Faithful spirit doth a thing conceal.
- 14 A people falls that hath no counsels wise:  
In many Counsellors salvation lies. -
- 15 He'll smart who goes for strangers surety:  
Who hates to give the hand-pledge, safe is he.
- 16 A gracious Woman honor doth retain:  
And violent men hold fast the wealth they gain.
- 17 The Kind man's to himself benevolent.  
E'en his own flesh the Cruel doth torment.
- 18 The Wicked earneth wages that are vain:  
He that sows Righteousness—a real gain.
- 19 Who steadfast is in Right, Life followeth:  
Who evil doth pursue, pursueth Death.
- 20 The Crooked-hearted are by God abhorred:  
The Upright in their way delight the Lord.

- 21 Though hand, indeed, may join in hand, yet he  
That's Vile, from punishment shall not be free:  
The seed of Good men shall delivered be.
- 22 As is a ring of gold in a swine's snout,  
So is a Woman fair but sense without.
- 23 The wish of Righteous men is only good:  
Wrath is the hope of men of Wicked mood.
- 24 There's one that scatters, yet increases more:  
And one that comes to want, though he before  
Has been, unjustly, holding back his store.
- 25 The Bountiful soul enriched shall surely be:  
Who others doth refresh, refreshed is he.
- 26 Him people curse who doth the corn withhold:  
Blessed is the head of him by whom it's sold.
- 27 He that seeks Goodness truly, seeks good will:  
But ill to him shall come, who strives for Ill.
- 28 He that trusts in his Wealth shall come to grief:  
But Righteous men shall flourish like a leaf.
- 29 Who harasses his house is heir to wind:  
Fools shall be servants to the Wise in mind.

- 30 A Good man's fruit presents a tree of Life:  
He winneth souls whose heart hath Wisdom rife.
- 31 Behold, the Good doth God on earth requite:  
Then how much more the Vile and Sinful wight!
- 

## CHAPTER 12.

- 1 He that Correction loves, loves knowledge sure:  
But he that hates Reproof remains a boor.
- 2 Favor unto the Good doth God accord:  
Men of devices ill condemns the Lord.
- 3 By Wickedness none can established be:  
The root of Righteous men unmoved we see.
- 4 She is her husband's crown—the noble Dame:  
As rottenness in his bones—she that brings shame.
- 5 The thoughts of Righteous men are just and mete:  
The counsels of the Wicked are deceit.
- 6 The words of Vile men lie for blood in wait:  
The mouth of the Upright saves them from their fate.

- 7 The Wicked overthrown, are gone for aye:  
The house of Righteous men is sure to stay.
- 8 As is their wisdom men are praised and prized:  
But the Perverse in heart shall be despised.
- 9 Be light esteemed, and servants have, instead  
Of honoring thyself, and lacking bread.
- 10 Due care upon their beasts the Good bestow:  
The hearts of Wicked men no pity know.
- 11 Who tills his land gets bread enough from thence:  
Who follows worthless men is void of sense.
- 12 After wrong-doers' nets the Wicked lust:  
Fruit-yielding is the root of persons just.
- 13 In evil lips a Bad man's snare doth grow:  
The Righteous shall come out of every woe.
- 14 His own mouth's fruit with good each person sates:  
His own hands' recompense each man awaits.
- 15 The Fool's way seemeth right in his own eyes:  
He hearkens unto counsel who is wise.

- 16 The wrath of Fools is instantly revealed:  
But shame is by the prudent man concealed.
- 17 He that speaks truth, for Justice testifies:  
But for Deceit, the witness speaking lies.
- 18 Some rashly speak like piercings of a sword:  
But healing doth the wise men's tongue afford.
- 19 The lip of Truth shall firmly stand for aye:  
A Lying tongue can but a moment stay.
- 20 Deceit is in those hearts contriving ill:  
But them that counsel peace, sweet Joy doth fill.
- 21 The Righteous never shall with mischief meet:  
But wicked men with evil are replete.
- 22 The lips of Falsehood are by God abhorred:  
They that deal faithfully delight the Lord.
- 23 A Prudent man hides knowledge, and no less  
The heart of Fools proclaimeth foolishness.
- 24 The Diligent hand is destined to command:  
To taskwork doomed shall be the Slothful hand.



- 25 The care in a man's heart doth it depress:  
But a good word doth give it joyfulness.
- 26 The Good surpass their fellow men alway:  
The way of wicked men leads them astray.
- 27 His game he roasts not who by Sloth is bound:  
Man's precious wealth in Diligence is found.
- 28 The way of Righteousness hath life, indeed:  
Yea, unto deathlessness her path doth lead.
- 

## CHAPTER 13.

- 1 His sire's instruction doth a wise son hear:  
But to Reproof a Scoffer gives no ear.
- 2 From his mouth's fruit a man eats good, indeed:  
The Sinner's appetite shall violence feed.
- 3 He keeps his life who guards his mouth alway:  
Who opens wide his lips shall have dismay.
- 4 The Sluggard longs—his cravings are denied:  
The diligent soul is fully satisfied.

- 5 Unto the Righteous, hateful are all lies:  
Shame and dishonor from the Vile arise. -
- 6 Righteousness guards those upright in the way:  
But Wickedness makes sinners fall and stray.
- 7 One seemeth rich, yet is of all bereft:  
One, seeming poor, has yet great riches left.
- 8 A man his wealth as his life's ransom brings:  
The Poor hear no rebukes nor threatenings.
- 9 The light of righteous men shines joyfully:  
But quenched the lamp of wicked men shall be.
- 10 Naught but contention comes from haughty Pride:  
But with the well advised doth Wisdom bide.
- 11 Wealth shall grow less when got by actions vain:  
Who gather it by toil, increase their gain.
- 12 A Hope that's long deferred makes sick the heart:  
Desires, fulfilled, a tree of life impart.
- 13 Who scorns God's word, shall be thereto in debt:  
Who fears the Precept, his reward shall get.

- 14 A fount of life presents the sage's lore,  
Whereby to shun death's snares for evermore.
- 15 A good intelligence doth favor win:  
But rugged is the way of them that sin
- 16 The Prudent act with knowledge and by rule:  
But spread abroad is folly by a Fool.
- 17 A wicked Messenger falls into woe:  
But healing doth the faithful one bestow.
- 18 Who shuns Reproof gets shame and poverty:  
But he that heeds Rebuke, shall honored be.
- 19 Desires fulfilled are sweet unto the soul:  
Fools loathe departing from their evil goal.
- 20 Who walketh with the Wise, he wise shall grow:  
Associates of Fools shall be brought low.
- 21 Sinners by evil ever are pursued:  
But righteous men shall be repaid with good.
- 22 The good man leaves his substance and estate  
To his own children's children, soon or late:  
The Sinner's wealth the Righteous doth await.

- 23 Much food the poor men's tillage doth bestow:  
And some for want of justice are brought low.
- 24 He hates his son who spares his rod, in truth:  
But he who loves him chasteneth his youth.
- 25 The Righteous eat and satisfy their will:  
The bad man's body ne'er shall get its fill.

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### CHAPTER 14.

- 1 To build their homes wise Wives their hands employ:  
The Foolish, with their hands their homes destroy.
- 2 Who upright walks, the Fear of God him sways:  
God's scorned by him that's crooked in his ways.
- 3 The mouth of Fools a rod of pride doth show:  
The wise men's lips preserve them from all woe.
- 4 The crib is clean where oxen are not found:  
But through the oxen's strength the fruits abound.
- 5 A faithful Witness ne'er the truth denies.  
But a false Witness utters naught but lies.

- 6 The Scoffer wisdom seeks, but findeth none:  
By men of sense is knowledge easily won.
- 7 Go, face a man that has a foolish mind:  
No lips of knowledge thou in him shalt find.
- 8 The Prudent, in their wisdom, heed their way:  
Deceit's the folly that the Fools display
- 9 Each Fool doth make a mock at deeds of ill:  
But 'mong the Upright there is found good will.
- 10 The Heart knows all the bitterness that's there:  
And in its joy no stranger has a share.
- 11 The house of wicked men shall be o'erthrown:  
The tent of upright men shall thrive alone.
- 12 A road which to a man seems right and straight,  
Oft in the ways of death doth terminate.
- 13 Even in laughter feels the Heart its pain,  
And joy at last brings sorrow in its train.
- 14 With their own ways are filled they that backslide:  
The Good are from themselves all satisfied.

- 15 The simple man believes all that men tell:  
But to his steps the Prudent looketh well.
- 16 The wise man, fearing, doth from ill depart:  
The Fool is raging, confident in heart.
- 17 He that soon angry grows, deals foolishly:  
The man of ill devices shall hated be.
- 18 Folly, the Simple, as its heirs, retain:  
The crown of knowledge do the Prudent gain.
- 19 The Bad are doomed to bow before the Good:  
And at the gates of men of rectitude,  
The Wicked shall appear to beg for food.
- 20 His very neighbors hate the man in need:  
But, lo, the Rich have many friends, indeed.
- 21 He who his neighbors scorns, sins grievously:  
Those gracious to the Meek, shall happy be.
- 22 They stray who ills contrive: they that devise  
What's good, see grace and truth for them arise.
- 23 All painful Labor doth in profit end:  
The mere words of the lips to want do tend.

- 24    The Wise do in their wealth a crown possess:  
      The folly of the Fools is foolishness.
- 25    A truthful witness saveth human lives:  
      Who utters falsehood, he deceit contrives.
- 26    The Fear of God gives man strong confidence:  
      His children shall a shelter have from thence.
- 27    The Fear of God life's fountain doth display,  
      For men to shun the snares of death away.
- 28    A numerous people is the pride of kings:  
      The want of men, to princes ruin brings.
- 29    The slow to anger have abundant sense:  
      Impatient men give folly prominence.
- 30    Life to the body is a gentle heart:  
      Envy doth rottenness to the bones impart.
- 31    Who wrong the Poor, their Maker they blaspheme:  
      Those gracious to the Poor do God esteem.
- 32    In their distress the Wicked down are thrust:  
      E'en at their death, the Righteous still have trust.

- 33 Wisdom rests in the wise man's heart alone:  
What's in the breast of Fools is soon made known. .
- 34 Righteousness makes a nation high and great:  
But Sin is a reproach to any state.
- 35 Wise servants win the favor of the king:  
His anger's roused 'gainst him that shame doth bring.
- 

## CHAPTER 15.

- 1 A gentle answer causeth wrath to fly:  
Anger is roused by words that mortify.
- 2 A Wise man's tongue doth knowledge well express:  
The mouth of Fools pours out but foolishness.
- 3 The eyes of God, which are in every place,  
Keep watch upon the noble and the base.
- 4 A gentle tongue a tree of Life doth make:  
But its perverseness doth the spirit break.
- 5 His sire's correction doth a Fool despise:  
But he that heeds Reproof becometh wise.



- 6    A good man's house with treasure doth abound:  
     In bad men's revenues is trouble found.
- 7    Knowledge to spread, the wise men's lips delight:  
     Fools' hearts disseminate what is not right.
- 8    A bad man's sacrifice by God's abhorred:  
     The pray'r of upright men delights the Lord.
- 9    A bad man's way is e'er by God abhorred:  
     Who righteousness pursues, him loves the Lord.
- 10   For him that leaves God's path, sore Chastening waits:  
     Yea, Death for him that admonition hates.
- 11   Even Death's regions are before the Lord:  
     How much more are the hearts of men explored!
- 12   A Scornor loves not to be chid, and so  
     Unto the Wise refuseth he to go.
- 13   A merry Heart the face doth cheerful make:  
     A heartfelt Sorrow doth the spirit break.
- 14   The wise man's heart seeks knowledge to secure:  
     To feed on folly is the Fool's mouth sure.

- 15 Of the afflicted, evil is each day:  
But they whose Hearts are cheerful, feast away.,
- 16 The Fear of God, with little of estate,  
Rather than with confusion, treasures great.
- 17 Better a meal of herbs when Love is there,  
Than a stalled ox with Hatred for the fare.
- 18 Roused is contention by a man of rage:  
But he that's slow to wrath doth strife assuage.
- 19 Hedges of thorns the Sluggard's road await:  
The path of Upright men's a highway straight.
- 20 A father's gladdened by a son that's wise:  
A foolish man his mother doth despise.
- 21 Folly is joy to him that's void of sense:  
Straightforward walk men of intelligence.
- 22 Where there's no counsel, vain is all that's planned:  
Through many Counsellors each plan will stand.
- 23 From answers of men's mouths can joy accrue:  
How precious is a word in season due!

- 24    The path of life leads upward for the Wise:  
      So from Sheol beneath he ever flies.
- 25    The proud men's homes God ruins through the land,  
      But makes the widow's landmark firmly stand.
- 26    Devices evil are by God abhorred:  
      But pleasant words are pure before the Lord.
- 27    He hurts his house whose greed of gain is great:  
      But he is sure to live, who gifts doth hate.
- 28    The good man's heart, thought to his answers brings:  
      The mouth of wicked men pours out vile things.
- 29    The Lord unto the Wicked draws not near:  
      The pray'r of righteous men He loves to hear.
- 30    What cheers the eyes, the heart rejoices at:  
      So, too, a good report the bones makes fat.
- 31    The ear that hears life's admonitions well,  
      Is ever sure among the Wise to dwell.
- 32    He scorns his life, who doth Instruction shun:  
      By him that hears Reproof, is wisdom won.

- 33 The fear of God to wisdom guide should be:  
Before all honor comes humility.
- 

## CHAPTER 16.

- 1 To man belong the Plannings of the heart:  
The answer of the tongue doth God impart.
- 2 All ways of men seem pure in their own eyes:  
God doth the spirits weigh and scrutinize.
- 3 Commit thy doings to the Lord, O man,  
Then shall established be thine every plan.
- 4 God made each thing for its own end, and so  
Even the Wicked for the day of woe.
- 5 Each heart-proud man by God's abhorred; e'en  
though  
Hand join in hand, he'll not unpunished go.
- 6 Through Love and Truth iniquity's forgiven:  
And men spurn evil through the Fear of Heaven.
- 7 When on men's ways His favor God bestows,  
He even reconciles to them their Foes.

- 8 Have little but through righteousness obtained,  
Rather than incomes great, unjustly gained.
- 9 Man's heart his ways devises and selects:  
But 'tis the Lord that e'er his steps directs.
- 10 Upon his lips decision has a king:  
His mouth is ne'er in judgment trespassing.
- 11 A balance just and scales the Lord ordains:  
His Work are all the weights the bag contains.
- 12 To loathe to do what's vile should kings be prone:  
By Righteousness established is the throne.
- 13 Lo, righteous lips are the delight of kings;  
And him they love who uttereth right things.
- 14 A king's wrath is as messengers of death:  
But 'tis appeased by men with Wisdom's breath.
- 15 Life-giving is the king's bright smiling face;  
A cloud that brings the latter rain—his grace.
- 16 Wisdom, than gold, 'tis better to attain:  
Rather than silver, Understanding gain.

- 17 The highway of the Just is shunning ill:  
Who keeps his way, his life he guardeth still.
- 18 Before destruction goeth Pride, indeed:  
A haughty spirit doth a fall precede.
- 19 Far rather humble with the Meek abide,  
Than with the Arrogant the spoil divide.
- 20 Who heeds the word shall find prosperity:  
And he who trusts in God shall happy be.
- 21 The Wise of heart is called a man of sense:  
Learning increases through sweet eloquence.
- 22 They own a well of Life who sense possess:  
A Fool's correction is his foolishness.
- 23 His mouth gets prudence from the wise man's heart,  
Which to his lips more learning doth impart.
- 24 Like honey-combs are words of pleasant tones,  
Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
- 25 A road which to a man seems right and straight,  
Oft in the ways of Death doth terminate.

- 26 The laborers' craving toils for him alway;  
For his own mouth a spur on him doth lay.
- 27 A worthless man devises mischief dire;  
And on his lips there's as a scorching fire.
- 28 A froward man spreads discord far and wide;  
And friend from friend the Whisperers divide.
- 29 A man of violence, enticing, would  
His neighbor lead in ways that are not good.
- 30 Who shuts his eyes, devises froward things;  
He that his lips compresses, mischief brings.
- 31 The head that's hoary is with glory crowned,  
And in the way of Righteousness 'tis found.
- 32 He that is slow to anger is by far  
Better than even mighty heroes are;  
And he that doth control his spirit well,  
The taker of a city doth excel.
- 33 The lot is cast into the lap, indeed;  
It's whole decision doth from God proceed.

## CHAPTER 17.

- 1 Better a morsel of dry bread with peace  
Than homes where feasts and quarrels never cease.
- 2 Wise servants 'bove a worthless son advance,  
And share with brothers the inheritance.
- 3 The fining pot to silver man applies,  
To gold the furnace; God—the hearts He tries.
- 4 Doers of ill to wicked lips attend;  
Liars their ears to tongues of mischief lend.
- 5 Who mocks the Poor, scorn at his Maker throws:  
Unpunished he'll not go who gloats o'er woes.
- 6 A crown are children's children to the old;  
And sons their glory in their sires behold.
- 7 Excellent speech becomes not Fools: much less  
Fit for the Noble falsehood to express.
- 8 A gift's a jewel in its owner's eyes:  
At every turn doth its success arise.



- 9 He seeketh love who doth offences hide:  
Who harp upon a matter friends divide.
- 10 More deeply will a chiding, as a rule,  
Enter into a man of wisdom's school,  
Than will a hundred strokes into a Fool.
- 11 An evil man's but on rebellion bent;  
'Gainst him a cruel messenger is sent.
- 12 A bear robbed of her whelps a man may meet,  
But not a Fool in his great folly's heat.
- 13 From that man's house ills ne'er shall turn away  
Who, in return for good, doth ill repay.
- 14 As one lets water loose, so Quarrels start:  
Then ere it breaketh out, from strife depart.
- 15 Who justify the Wicked, or condemn  
The Just, God equally abhorreth them.
- 16 What use is it for Fools a price to find  
For buying wisdom, when they have no mind?
- 17 A true friend loveth at all times, and he  
Is born a brother for adversity.

- 18 A man that's void of sense doth pledge his hand,  
And for his neighbor surety doth stand.
- 19 He loves offence, who strife loves to create:  
He ruin seeks, who raises high his gate.
- 20 The froward-hearted finds no happiness:  
With tongues perverse men fall into distress.
- 21 He'll grieve who hath begot a foolish boy;  
No father of a worthless Fool hath joy.
- 22 A merry Heart is a good medicine:  
Despondency dries up the bones within.
- 23 Out of the bosom bribes the Wicked draw,  
To bend the paths of Justice and of Law.
- 24 Wisdom the Prudent have before their face:  
The Fool's eyes search the earth's remotest place.
- 25 A foolish son's his father's grief and care,  
And bitterness to her that him did bear.
- 26 To punish, too, the Righteous is not good,  
Or smite the Noble for their rectitude.

- 27 Who holdeth back his words hath knowledge rare:  
Prudent is he who doth his spirit spare.
- 28 Even a Fool, when silent, wise is deemed:  
Who shuts his lips, he prudent is esteemed.
- 

## CHAPTER 18.

- 1 The Recluse seeketh but his own desire:  
'Gainst all true Wisdom he breaks out with ire.
- 2 In Understanding, Fools no pleasure find,  
But only in revealing their own mind.
- 3 When wicked men arrive, there comes disgrace,  
And shame accompanies all conduct base.
- 4 The words of a man's mouth deep waters seem;  
And Wisdom's well-spring is a bubbling stream.
- 5 Favor to bad men 'tis not good to pay,  
To push in judgment righteous men away.
- 6 A Fool's lips enter into strife with all,  
And his own mouth for blows doth ever call.

- 7 A Fool's mouth is his own destruction e'er,  
And of his life his own lips prove a snare.
- 8 A Whisperer's words are dainty bits, and lo,  
Into the body's inmost parts they go.
- 9 They also that are slothful in their toil  
Are brothers unto them that waste and spoil.
- 10 The name of God's a tower strong and sure:  
Good men run into it and are secure.
- 11 Wealth is a rich man's fortress and retreat,  
And like a towering wall in his conceit.
- 12 Man's heart before misfortune haughty grows;  
Humility before all Honor goes.
- 13 If men an answer give before they hear,  
Their folly and their shame are thus made clear.
- 14 The spirit of a man will bear his pain;  
A spirit that's depressed who can sustain?
- 15 The minds of prudent men do knowledge gain;  
The wise men's ear seeks knowledge to obtain.

- 16    A person's gifts which room for him create,  
      Bring him into the presence of the great.
- 17    He that his cause pleads first, seems just and true;  
      But his opponent comes to search him through.
- 18    A ceasing of disputes the lot creates,  
      And mighty litigants it separates.
- 19    Offended brothers to be won, by far  
      Are harder than strong cities even are;  
      Yea, their disputes are like a castle's bar.
- 20    The fruits of a man's mouth his stomach fill;  
      His lips' increase shall satisfy him still.
- 21    O'er Death and Life the tongue hath pow'r complete;  
      And they that love it, of its fruit shall eat.
- 22    He that doth find a wife finds happiness,  
      And him the Lord does thus with favor bless.
- 23    Of supplicating words the Poor make use:  
      The Rich reply with harshness and abuse.
- 24    A man's companions oft to ruin tend:  
      Oft closer than a brother sticks a friend.

## CHAPTER 19.

- 1 The poor that walketh in his uprightness  
Excels a Fool who doth false lips possess.
- 2 To have zeal without knowledge is not meet;  
They miss their way who hasten with their feet.
- 3 Man's folly doth subvert his way, and yet  
Against the Lord his heart presumes to fret.
- 4 Many a friend, indeed, man's wealth doth add:  
The poor is parted from the friend he had.
- 5 False witnesses shall not unpunished go:  
He that speaks lies shall not escape from woe.
- 6 Many to court the liberal man will go:  
And all are friends to men that gifts bestow.
- 7 Hate to the poor his brethren do display:  
Much more his friends from him go far away:  
As he pursues the words they'd said before,  
He has their promises, and nothing more.
- 8 He loveth his own life who Wisdom gains:  
He that keeps Prudence, happiness obtains.

- 9    False witnesses shall not unpunished go;  
     And he that speaketh lies shall be laid low.
- 10   Luxury is not seemly for a fool;  
     Much less for slaves to have o'er princes rule.
- 11   A man's made slow to anger by good sense:  
     His glory 'tis to pardon an offence.
- 12   The wrath of kings is like the lion's roar;  
     Like dew on grass their favor they outpour.
- 13   A foolish son woe to his father brings;  
     And ceaseless drops are a wife's quarrelings.
- 14   Houses and wealth from fathers each derives;  
     But only from the Lord come prudent Wives.
- 15   Into deep slumber Slothfulness doth cast;  
     The soul of Indolence is doomed to fast.
- 16   He keeps his life who heed to precepts pays;  
     But he shall die that's careless of his ways.
- 17   Who pitieth the poor lends to the Lord,  
     And pay for his good deed will He accord.

- 18 Chasten thy son while there is hope as yet;  
Do not thy soul upon his ruin set.
- 19 They'll punishment bear, the very wrathful men:  
If them thou save, them thou must save again.
- 20 Receive Instruction, give to Counsel heed,  
That in the end thou may'st be wise, indeed.
- 21 Many devices has the heart of man,  
But none shall stand except the Lord's own plan.
- 22 A person's charm doth from his Kindness rise:  
The poor is better than a man that lies.
- 23 The Fear of God brings life: thus satisfied,  
Unvisited by evil, men abide.
- 24 His hand into the dish the Sluggard dips,  
And doth not bring it back e'en to his lips.
- 25 Smite Scoffers—prudence will the Simple learn;  
Reprove the Prudent—knowledge they'll discern.
- 26 Who spoils his father, makes his mother flee,  
A son that brings disgrace and shame is he.



- 27 Oh cease, my son, to hear instructive lore  
Only to stray from words of knowledge more.
- 28 A worthless witness mocks at judgment's pow'r:  
The mouth of wicked men doth wrong devour.
- 29 There are prepared for Scoffers judgments sore,  
And for the back of Fools are stripes in store.
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## CHAPTER 20.

- 1 Wine is a mocker, and strong drink doth brawl;  
He is not wise who errs thereby at all.
- 2 Terror, like lions' roaring, kings inspire;  
'Gainst their own lives they sin who rouse their ire.
- 3 'Tis a man's Honor never to engage  
In strife: but every Fool breaks out in rage.
- 4 The Sluggard plows not through the winter's cold;  
He'll beg in harvest, but will naught behold.
- 5 Plans, deep as water, holds the heart of man;  
But understanding men draw out each plan.

- 6 Most men proclaim that each of them is kind:  
But, oh, a man that's faithful who can find?
- 7 A just man walks in his integrity,—  
His children after him shall happy be.
- 8 A king that sitteth on the judgment throne,  
Winnows all evil with his eyes alone.
- 9 Who can say, "I have made mine heart all pure,  
Yea, from my sin I'm cleansed, I am full sure?"
- 10 All divers measures and all divers weights,  
Both equally the Lord abominates.
- 11 E'en by the doings of a child we see,  
Whether his work will pure and upright be.
- 12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye,  
Have both alike been made by God on high.
- 13 Love not Sleep, lest thou come to poverty;  
Open thine eyes, and filled with bread thou'lt be.
- 14 "'Tis bad, 'tis bad," thus doth the Buyer say:  
But then he boasts, when he is gone his way.

- 15 There's gold and pearls, a multitude of them;  
The lips of Knowledge are a precious gem.
- 16 From him that is a stranger's surety,  
His garment take, and held in pledge be he.
- 17 Sweet is to men the bread of Falsehood; still  
Soon afterwards their mouths doth gravel fill.
- 18 Established is each plan by counsel's aid;  
By measures wise let war by thee be made.
- 19 Secrets the wandering Tale-bearers reveal:  
And, therefore, with a Prattler do not deal.
- 20 Who 'gainst his parent doth his curses shout,  
In utter darkness shall his lamp go out.
- 21 At first one gets possessions hastily;  
But in the end they shall not blessed be.
- 22 Say not, "By me shall evil be repaid:"  
Wait on the Lord, and He shall be thine aid.
- 23 Abhorred are divers weights in Heaven's sight;  
And a false balance is not good nor right.

- 24 The goings of a man the Lord doth sway;  
Then man—how can he understand his way?
- 25 'Tis a man's snare a thing to consecrate  
In haste, and after vows investigate.
- 26 The Wicked are dispersed by a wise king,  
And he o'er them the threshing wheel doth bring.
- 27 Man's soul is God's bright lamp; it searches, too,  
The body's chambers through and through.
- 28 The king's preserved by love and truth alone:  
'Tis loving kindness that upholds his throne.
- 29 Their glory in their strength the young behold:  
The hoary head's the beauty of the old.
- 30 Stripes, wounding, cleanse away the ills of each:  
And strokes the body's inmost chambers reach.

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## CHAPTER 21.

- 1 As water-streams kings' hearts are in God's hands:  
They're turned to wheresoe'er His will demands.

- 2    Man's every way seems right in his own eyes:  
     But God the Hearts doth weigh and scrutinize.
- 3    Justice and Righteousness to exercise  
     Far more than Sacrifice the Lord doth prize.
- 4    A haughty look, and a proud heart within,  
     Even the lamp of wicked men, is sin.
- 5    The plans of Diligence to surplus tend;  
     The haste of hasty men in want will end.
- 6    Stores got by lying tongues are but the breath,  
     The fleeting breath, of those that seek for Death.
- 7    The Wicked by their violence, since they  
     Refuse to do what's just, are swept away.
- 8    The way is crooked of the guilty wight:  
     As for the Pure, his work is straight and right.
- 9    Better in the roof's corner to abide,  
     Than with a brawling wife in houses wide.
- 10   The bad man's soul longs evil to embrace:  
     Yea, in his eyes his neighbor finds no grace.

- 11 The Scoffer punished, wise the Simple grow:  
The Wise, instructed, more and more they'll know.
- 12 The Good regard the wicked man's estates,  
Whom into ruin God precipitates.
- 13 Who at the poor man's cry doth stop his ear,  
He, too, shall cry aloud, but none shall hear.
- 14 Anger—a gift in secret pacifies;  
Strong wrath—the bribe that in the bosom lies.
- 15 To do what's just, is to the Righteous glee;  
Ruin to those that work iniquity.
- 16 He that from Wisdom's way astray is led,  
Shall rest in the assembly of the Dead.
- 17 He shall be poor who loveth gaiety;  
Those fond of wine and oil ne'er rich shall be.
- 18 The bad shall be a ransom for the good:  
The treacherous for men of rectitude.
- 19 Dwell rather in a desert free from strife,  
Than with a fretful and contentious wife.

- 20 Choice stores and oil are in the wise man's place;  
They're swallowed up by foolish men and base.
- 21 He that's to righteousness and love inclined,  
Shall life, and righteousness, and honor find.
- 22 A wise man scales of mighty men the town;  
The strength in which it trusted he brings down.
- 23 He that keeps o'er his mouth and tongue a guard,  
Keeps troubles ever from his soul debarred.
- 24 The proud and haughty, Scorners is his name,  
Acts with the insolence of pride and shame.
- 25 The Slothful man his very wishes kill,  
Because his hands refuse to labor still.
- 26 One, all day long in greedy craving lives:  
The righteous man withholdeth not but gives.
- 27 A bad man's sacrifice is a vile thing:  
More so, if that with evil he doth bring.
- 28 False witnesses are doomed to pass away:  
The man that heareth shall forever stay.

- 29 A wicked man a hardened face displays:  
The upright man, he ordereth his ways.
- 30 Wisdom and Understanding all must fail;  
No Counsel can against the Lord prevail.
- 31 The horse is for the battle day prepared:  
But by the Lord the Victory's declared.

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## CHAPTER 22.

- 1 Choose rather a good name than wealth untold;  
Prefer good grace to silver and to gold.
- 2 The Rich and Poor together meet on earth:  
'Tis God that made them all and gave them birth.
- 3 The Prudent see the ill, themselves they hide:  
The Simple, passing on, are mortified.
- 4 Life, riches, honor are the sure reward  
Of Meekness and the Fearing of the Lord.
- 5 Both thorns and snares are in the froward's way:  
Who keeps his life, he far from them shall stray.



- 6 Train up a child according to his way,  
Even when old from it he will not stray.
- 7 The Rich rule o'er the Poor; who borrows, he  
Must ever servant to the lender be.
- 8 Who soweth Wrong shall reap calamity:  
And doomed to fail his anger's rod shall be.
- 9 Who hath a bountiful eye, he shall be blessed;  
For of his bread he gives to those distressed.
- 10 Cast out the Scoffer, then will strife go off;  
Yea, then will cease contention, shame and scoff.
- 11 Pureness of heart who loveth, grace has he  
Upon his lips; the king his friend shall be.
- 12 A watch o'er knowledge do God's eyes bestow;  
The words of treacherous men He doth o'erthrow.
- 13 The Sluggard saith, "A lion is without,  
I shall be murdered in the streets, no doubt."
- 14 The mouth of Women strange is a deep pit:  
With whom God's angry, he falls into it.

- 15 In a child's heart is Folly bound up fast:  
This far from him correction's rod will cast.
- 16 Who wrongs the Poor to get more wealth, and he  
Who giveth to the Rich, court penury.

BOOK III.

*Second Collection.*

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*Preface.*

- 17 To hear the wise men's words thine ear incline,  
And to my lore apply that heart of thine.
- 18 For 'tis a pleasant thing if, kept in thee,  
Together 'stablished on thy lips they be.
- 19 That e'er thy trust may be in God alone.  
Even to thee this day I've made them known.
- 20 Grand things I've written unto thee, behold,  
Counsels as well as Knowledge to unfold.
- 21 That I may make thee know the certainty  
Of Truth's fair words, that unto them, who thee  
Are sending, words of Truth brought back may be.

*Robbing the Poor.*

- 22 Rob not the Poor, since poverty is his fate,  
And the Afflicted crush not in the gate:  
23 For, lo, the Lord is sure their cause to plead,  
Yea, sure to spoil their spoilers' life, indeed.

*Irritable Men.*

- 24 No friendship make with men that angry grow;  
And with a wrathful man thou shalt not go:  
25 Lest, learning all his ways, thou unaware,  
Get what unto thy soul will prove a snare.

*Surety.*

- 26 Be not of them that pledge their hand, nor yet  
Be one of those that surety go for debt:  
27 If thou have naught for paying, why should he  
Then take away thy bed from under thee?  
28 To shift the ancient landmark never dare,  
Which hath been set by thine own father's care.

*The Diligent Man.*

- 29 If thou dost ever see a man that's bent  
On being in his labor diligent,  
To stand before great kings that man is sure,  
And not before such men as are obscure.
- 

## CHAPTER 23.

*Awe Before Appetite.*

- 1 When with a ruler thou dost sit to eat  
Consider well with whom thou thus dost meet;  
2 To put a knife unto thy throat 'twere right,  
If thou be one that's giv'n to appetite.  
3 Be not desirous of his dainties sweet,  
Seeing that they are but deceitful meat.

*Transitoriness of Riches.*

- 4 In getting wealth waste not thy toil and care;  
Thine own good sense should teach thee to forbear;  
5 It's gone, when once it's glanced at by thine eye,  
Yea, Riches make themselves swift wings to fly,  
As eagles soar towards the heaven high.

*Hospitality of the Evil Eye.*

- 6 Of him that hath an evil eye ne'er eat  
The bread, nor long to taste his dainty meat;  
7 For as he reckons in his heart, is he;  
Yea, he saith, "Eat and drink and merry be,"  
But all the time his heart is not with thee.  
8 Each eaten piece thou must throw up again,  
And lose thy pleasant words expressed in vain.
- 9 Oh speak not in the ears of men unwise;  
The wisdom of thy words they will despise.

*Landmarks.*

- 10 The ancient landmark do not shift, nor press  
Into the fields owned by the fatherless!  
11 For their avenger mighty is, indeed,  
And he is sure their cause with thee to plead.
- 12 Thine heart unto Instruction ever lend,  
Thine ears unto the words of Knowledge bend.



*Correction of Children.*

- 13 To keep correction from the child ne'er try:  
If beaten with the rod, he shall not die.  
14 Thou with the rod shalt beat him, and his soul  
Thou surely shalt deliver from Sheol.

*Wisdom and Right.*

- 15 My son, if wise should be the heart of thine,  
Then shall my heart rejoice, yea, even mine:  
16 Then shall my reins exult and find delight,  
If I shall hear thy lips speak what is right.

*Envy Not Sinners.*

- 17 To envy sinners let thine heart disdain,  
But ever in the fear of God remain:  
18 For there's a sure reward in store for thee;  
Also thine hope cut off shall never be.

*Gluttony.*

- 19 Grow wise, my son, by hearing what I say,  
And do thou guide thine heart in the right way.  
20 Be not 'mong those who drink their wine with greed,  
Or who on flesh do gluttonously feed:  
21 Drunkards and Gluttons come to poverty:  
And they that slumber, clothed in rags shall be.

22 Obey thy sire by whom thou wast begot,  
And though thy mother's old, despise her not.

23 Oh buy the truth, and sell it not again;  
Wisdom, Instruction, Reason—all obtain.

*Parents of the Good and Wise.*

24 The father of the good, great gladness gains:  
Who a wise child begets, he joy obtains.  
25 Glad be thy father and thy mother e'er,  
And let her much rejoice that thee did bear.

*The Pit of the Harlot.*

26 O thou, my son, thine heart give unto me, -  
And by thine eyes my ways observed shall be.  
27 A deep pit is a Harlot, truth to tell,  
And a Strange Woman is a narrow cell.  
28 She as a robber lies in wait, and thus  
'Mong men she doth increase the treacherous.

*Wine and Woe.*

29 Who hath woe, sorrow, strifes, complaining, sighs,  
Wounds without cause, and redness of the eyes?  
30 They that do tarry long when at the wine,  
They that to go and seek mixed drinks combine.

- 31 Look not upon the wine though red it be,  
When sparkling in the cup it's seen by thee,  
When gently it goes down and evenly:
- 32 For in the end a serpent's bite 'twill bring,  
And like an adder it is sure to sting.
- 33 Yea, then thine eyes strange visions shall behold,  
Thine heart shall utter things, perverse and bold.
- 34 Yea, thou shalt be as he who down doth lie  
In the sea's midst, or on the mast's top high.
- 35 "They've stricken me, no hurt did I obtain;  
They've beaten me, I did not feel the pain;  
When I'll awake, I'll seek it yet again."
- 

## CHAPTER 24.

*Envy Not Sinners.*

- 1 Oh envy not the men that do what's wrong;  
To be with them together, do not long:
- 2 Their heart doth meditate on violence,  
Their lips speak naught but mischief and offence.

*Homes.*

- 3 A house is builded up through Wisdom's aid;  
By Understanding 'tis established made:

- 4    Yea, all the stores and chambers Knoweldge will  
     With precious and all pleasant riches fill.

*Strength of the Wise.*

- 5    A man that's wise doth e'er in strength abide;  
     By men of knowledge Pow'r is fortified;  
6    For thou shalt make thy war by measures wise;  
     In many Counsellors Salvation lies.
- 7    For Fools, too high is Wisdom to be got:  
     So in the gate their mouths they open not.
- 8    To them that meditate to do what's wrong,  
     The name of Mischief-makers shall belong.
- 9    The thought of Folly is of sin the freight:  
     The Scorner do all men abominate.
- 10   Art thou despondent in misfortune's hour,  
     Then faint, indeed, shall also be thy pow'r.

*Duty of Rescue.*

- 11   Deliver them that unto death are ta'en,  
     And hold thou back those ready to be slain.

- 12     "Behold, we knew not this," if thou should'st say;  
Lo, *He* regards it who the hearts doth weigh;  
And *He* that keeps thy soul doth surely know;  
    According as a man is acting, so  
    A recompense on him *He* doth bestow.

*Wisdom and Honey.*

- 13   My son, eat honey, for 'tis good to eat,  
    And honeycombs which to thy taste are sweet:  
14   So Wisdom to Thy soul thou'lt know to be:  
    If thou hast found it, a reward's for thee;  
    Also thine hope cut off thou ne'er shalt see.

*The Good and the Bad.*

- 15   Against the good man's home, ye vile and base,  
    Lie not in wait; spoil not his resting place:  
16   The good fall seven times and rise again:  
    The bad are overthrown by woe and pain.

*Fallen Foes.*

- 17   Do not rejoice when fallen is thy foe:  
    Let not thine heart gloat o'er his overthrow:  
18   Lest seeing, and displeased with it, God may  
    Consent to turn *His* wrath from him away.

*Evil Doers.*

- 19 Because of Evil-doers do not fret,  
Nor envious of the Wicked ever get:  
20 For evil men there's no reward in store;  
The bad man's lamp is quenched for evermore.

*Rebels.*

- 21 My son, fear God and fear the king, and hate  
With those, who long for change, to associate:  
22 For suddenly there shall arise their bane;  
And who can know the ruin of the twain.

*Respect of Persons.*

- 23 *These Sayings also to the Wise belong.*  
To favor men in judgment e'er is wrong.  
24 Peoples shall curse him and abominate,  
Who to the Wicked saith, "Thou'rt good and  
straight,"  
25 But those rebuking him, shall have success;  
Of them shall blessings come of happiness.  
26 He doth, who gives an answer right and straight,  
With kissing of the lips conciliate.

- 27 Arrange without, and in the field prepare  
Thy work, and then to build thy house take care.

*False Witnesses.*

- 28 No causeless witness 'gainst thy neighbor be;  
Nor practice with thy lips duplicity;  
29 Say not, "As he hath done to me, I, too,  
Will do to him, and give him back his due!"

*The Field of the Sluggard.*

- 30 I went along the Sluggard's field, and thence  
Passed by the vineyard of one void of sense;  
31 And, lo, it was with thorns all overgrown,  
Its face did nettles cover as their own,  
And broken down had been its wall of stone.  
32 When I beheld, I laid it to mine heart;  
A lesson did the sight to me impart.  
33 "A little sleep, a little slumber blest,  
A little folding of the hands to rest—"  
34 So, like a Highwayman, shall Poverty,  
And Want shall, like a Warrior, come to thee.





BOOK IV.

*Hezekiah's Collection.*



## CHAPTER 25.

- 1 *These proverbs, too, of Solomon, the men  
Of Hezekiah, Judah's King, did pen.*

*The King.*

- 2 It is God's honor to conceal a thing:  
To search it out, the honor of a king.
- 3 The heaven for height, the earth for depth, of kings  
The hearts—these are beyond all fathomings.
- 4 Remove the dross from silver and, no doubt,  
A vessel for the finer will come out:
- 5 Remove the Wicked from before the king  
And to his throne will Justice firmness bring.
- 6 Thyself before a king ne'er glorify,  
And stand not in the station of the high.
- 7 'Tis better far that it be said to thee,  
"Hither come up," than that thou lowered be  
Before the very prince thine eyes did see.

*Strife.*

- 8 Go not in haste a contest to pursue,  
Lest in the end you know not what to do,  
When your opponent has confounded you.
- 9 Debate thy cause with thine opponent; ne'er  
The secret of another lay thou bare:
- 10 Lest he that hears it be reviling thee,  
And ne'er from thee depart thine infamy.
- 11 A fitly spoken word resembles e'er  
Apples of gold with silver figures rare.
- 12 As golden earrings and as golden gear,  
Are wise reprovers to a listening ear.
- 13 As are at harvest time the cooling snows,  
So is a faithful messenger to those  
That send him: for refreshed their spirit grows.
- 14 He is as clouds and winds, but without rain,  
Who falsely boasteth of his gifts in vain.
- 15 Appeased are princes by forbearance shown,  
And a soft tongue will even break a bone.

- 16 Of honey found eat what's enough and fit;  
Lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.
- 17 In thy friend's house thy foot let seldom be,  
Lest wearying, he end in hating thee.
- 18 To mauls, and swords, and arrows sharp, compare  
Those that false witness 'gainst their neighbors bear.
- 19 Like broken tooth, and wavering foot, is thus  
In time of woe to trust the Treacherous.
- 20 As one who doff's his dress when cold winds blow,  
And as is vinegar on nitre, so  
Is he that singeth songs to hearts of woe.

*Kindness to Foes.*

- 21 Unto thy hungry foe give bread to eat;  
To slake his thirst with water, it is meet:
- 22 Thou coals of fire upon his head wilt lay,  
And unto thee will God thy guerdon pay.
- 23 As rain the north wind bringeth in a place,  
So makes a slanderous tongue an angry face.

- 24 Better in a roof's corner to abide,  
Than with a brawling Wife in houses wide.
- 25 As waters cold to thirsty souls, so are  
Good tidings when they come from countries far.
- 26 The Good, before the Wicked, tottering,  
Is like a troubled fount and turbid spring.
- 27 To eat much honey is not good: but, lo,  
For men to search out glory, it is so.
- 28 As cities broken through, that have no wall,  
Is he whose spirit has no check at all.
- 

## CHAPTER 26.

- 1 As snow in summer, as in harvest rain,  
So honor is not fit for Fools to gain.
- 2 Sparrows and swallows come back in their flight;  
So a man's causeless curse on him will light.

*Fools.*

- 3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle rules  
The ass, a rod is for the back of Fools.

- 4    Ne'er answer Fools in their own foolish way,  
      Lest thou should'st also seem to be as they.
- 5    But answer Fools their foolishness to meet,  
      Lest they be wise e'en in their own conceit.
- 6    Who by a Fool's hand does a message send,  
      His feet cut off, drinks damage in the end.
- 7    The lame man's legs hang down all helplessly;  
      So in the mouth of Fools will proverbs be.
- 8    As one who gems upon a stone-heap throws,  
      Is he that honor on a Fool bestows.
- 9    As thorns that go into the drunkard's hand,  
      Does in the mouth of Fools a proverb stand.
- 10   As archers, wounding all, are they that try  
      To hire a Fool, or them that just pass by.
- 11   As dogs return oft to their vomit, so  
      Do Fools repeatedly their follies show.
- 12   If thou one wise in his own eyes dost see,  
      There's hope of Fools more than of him can be.

*The Sluggard.*

- 13 "Behold, there is a leopard in the way,  
A lion in the streets,"—the Sluggards say.
- 14 Doors on their hinges turn; and in this way  
The Sluggard turns upon his bed each day.
- 15 Hands in the dish do bury slothful men,  
Weary to bring them to their mouth again.
- 16 The Sluggard wiser is in his own eyes  
Than seven men that give discreet replies.

*Social Pests.*

- 17 As one that by the ears a dog doth take,  
Is he that passes by, and, for the sake  
Of others' quarrels, doth his anger wake.
- 18 As one that in his madness shoots without,  
And firebrands, death, and arrows casts about;
- 19 So is the man who, having done his best  
To cheat his neighbor, saith, "I only jest."



- 20 For lack of wood the fire goes out; and where  
There is no Whisperer, strife ceaseth e'er.
- 21 As coals are to hot embers, wood to fire,  
Are quarrelsome men for kindling strife and ire.
- 22 A Whisperer's words are dainty bits, and, lo,  
Into the body's inmost parts they go.
- 23 As earthen pots with silver dross o'erlaid,  
So are warm lips with hearts by evil swayed.

*Dissembling Foes.*

- 24 A Foe dissembleth with his lips, but he  
Within him layeth up duplicity:
- 25 Believe him not when fair his voice doth sound;  
For seven horrors in his heart are found:
- 26 Although his hatred is by guile concealed,  
In public shall his evil be revealed.
- 27 Who digs a pit shall fall therein alone:  
On him that rolls it, shall return the stone.
- 28 A tongue of Falsehood doth its victims hate;  
And ruin doth a flattering mouth create.

## CHAPTER 27.

- 1 Boast not thyself about Tomorrow; for  
Thou know'st not what a day may have in store.
- 2 Let others' mouths commend thee, not thine own;  
Not *thine* praise thee, but stranger's lips alone.
- 3 Heavy are stones, and sand hath weight, it's plain;  
A Fool's vexation's heavier than the twain.
- 4 Wrath may impetuous and cruel be,  
But who can stand before strong jealousy?
- 5 Far better is rebuke when 'tis revealed,  
Than love, however great, that's kept concealed.
- 6 Faithful are wounds of Friends: profuse in show  
Are the deceitful kisses of a Foe.
- 7 Full souls loathe even honeycombs to eat:  
To hungry souls each bitter thing is sweet.
- 8 A man that travels from his place of rest,  
Is as a bird that wanders from her nest.

- 9 Perfume and oil rejoice the heart, indeed:  
So doth the sweetness of a Friend, in need,  
Which from his hearty counsel doth proceed.
- 10 Thy father's friend, and thine, do not forsake;  
Into thy brother's house no entrance make  
Upon the day of thy calamity:  
Far better is a Neighbor near to thee,  
Than is a brother if far off he be.
- 11 My son, make glad mine heart, and wise thou be,  
That I may answer those reproaching me.
- 12 The Prudent see the ill, themselves they hide;  
The Simple passing on, are mortified.
- 13 From him that is a stranger's surety,  
His garment take, in pledge held let him be.
- 14 If men with a loud voice their neighbors bless,  
And early rise their greeting to express,  
A curse it shall be counted and no less.

*A Brawling Woman.*

- 15 A Brawling Woman is, in every way,  
Like constant droppings in a rainy day:

- 16 He that would check her may the wind command,  
And hide the tell-tale oil on his right hand.
- 17 As iron sharpens iron, by the sight  
Of a Friend's face, a man is rendered bright.
- 18 Who keeps the fig-tree, of its fruit he'll eat;  
Who guards his master, he'll with honor meet.
- 19 As face to face in water answer can,  
So answereth the heart of man to man.
- 20 Be satisfied Death's regions never can;  
So ne'er are satisfied the eyes of man.
- 21 For silver there's the fining pot, for gold  
The furnace; and his Praise man's test doth hold.
- 22 Though thou a Fool should'st in a mortar, yea,  
Among bruised corn e'en with a pestle bray,  
From him his Folly ne'er will turn away.

*Good Husbandry.*

- 23 The state of all thy flock with zeal detect;  
Thy full attention to thy herds direct:
- 24 For not forever riches stay secure,  
Nor doth a crown from age to age endure.

- 25 The hay is gone, the tender grass appears,  
And man the mountains of their herbage clears.
- 26 The lambs are for thy clothing; of a field  
The purchase-price the goats are sure to yield.
- 27 And there will be goats' milk enough for food,  
For thee and all thine household, and that would  
For all thy maids as sustenance be good.
- 

## CHAPTER 28.

- 1 Although no man pursues, the Wicked flee;  
But bold as lions shall the Righteous be.
- 2 Through Sin rise many princes in a land,  
Prolonged by men that know and understand.
- 3 A sweeping rain that leaves no food, indeed,  
Are e'en the Poor who crush the Weak in need.
- 4 They that forsake the Law the vile commend:  
But they that keep the Law with them contend.
- 5 Of Justice fair bad men no knowledge own:  
To them that seek the Lord all things are known.
- 6 Better the Poor who walk in uprightness,  
Than those of crooked ways who wealth possess.

- 7 A wise son's he who keeps the Law; but he  
Shame on his father brings who seeks to be  
Forever in the Gluttons' company.
- 8 The wealth, which men by usury procure,  
For him alone they gather, to be sure,  
That is most kind and gracious to the Poor.
- 9 Even the Pray'r of men is loathed, if they  
Heed not the Law, but turn their ears away.
- 10 Who causes upright men to go astray,  
And spurs them on to tread the evil way,  
Into his own pit falls: but happiness  
The perfect men are destined to possess.
- 11 The Rich man's wise in his own eyes, it's true;  
The Poor, with understanding, search him through.
- 12 When the Good triumph, glory multiplies;  
Men hide themselves, whene'er the Wicked rise.
- 13 He that conceals his sins shall lack success;  
But they'll have grace who leave them and confess.
- 14 Happy the man who always fears: but, oh,  
Who hardeneth his heart falls into woe.

- 15 Bad Rulers o'er a needy race are e'er  
Like roaring lion and like ranging bear.
- 16 The senseless prince is in oppression great:  
He shall live long who unjust gain doth hate.
- 17 A man on whom the guilt of blood doth weigh,  
Though fleeing to the pit, let no one stay.
- 18 He shall be saved who upright walks: but all  
That are of crooked ways at once shall fall.
- 19 He'll have, that tills his land, enough of bread:  
Enough of poverty he'll have instead,  
That after vain and worthless men is led.
- 20 To faithful men are many blessings sent:  
He that on getting rich in haste is bent,  
Shall surely not be free from punishment.
- 21 To have respect of persons is not good:  
Nor men transgressing for a bit of food.
- 22 He hastes for wealth who hath an evil eye,  
And knows not Want will reach him by and by.
- 23 They that chide men more favor soon obtain  
Than he that flatters with his tongue can gain.

- 24 To Villains as companions they belong  
Who rob their parents, saying, "'Tis no wrong."
- 25 He stirs up strife who hath a soul of greed:  
Who trusts in God, he shall be rich, indeed.
- 26 He is a Fool who trusts in his own sense:  
Who walks in Wisdom, safety gains from thence.
- 27 He'll never lack who gives unto the Poor:  
Who hides his eyes, of many a curse is sure.
- 28 When bad men rise, all men in hiding stay:  
The Good increase, when bad men pass away.
- 

## CHAPTER 29.

- 1 The man that hardeneth his neck, though he  
Is oft admonished, suddenly shall be  
Destroyed, and that beyond all remedy.
- 2 Glad is the nation when the Good rise high:  
But when the Bad bear rule, the people sigh.
- 3 He that loves Wisdom gives his father joy:  
The friend of Harlots doth his wealth destroy.



- 4 A king by Justice makes a country stand:  
He that receiveth gifts o'erthrows the land.
- 5 If men with flattery their neighbor greet,  
A net they thus are spreading for his feet.
- 6 Each wrong of evil men contains a snare:  
The good man singeth and rejoiceth e'er.
- 7 The poor man's cause the Righteous seek to learn:  
The Wicked have no knowledge to discern.
- 8 The Scoffers set a city in a flame:  
But wise men turn away all wrath and blame.
- 9 If with a foolish man the Wise contest,  
Whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.
- 10 Bloodthirsty men hate him that's innocent:  
To save his life's the upright men's intent.
- 11 A Fool makes all his passion manifest:  
But a wise man doth keep it back suppressed.
- 12 Whene'er a Ruler hearkeneth to lies,  
None but the Wicked as his servants rise.

- 13 The Poor and the Oppressor meet: the Lord  
Unto the eyes of both doth light afford.
- 14 The king that judges faithfully the Poor,  
Shall cause his throne forever to endure.
- 15 Wisdom bestow the rod's admonishings:  
A child left free, shame to his mother brings.
- 16 Wrong multiplies when wicked men are great:  
The Good shall look upon their fallen state.
- 17 Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest;  
Yea, of delight he'll make thy soul possessed.
- 18 Where there's no vision, break the people loose:  
Happy are they that keep the Law in use.
- 19 By words no servant will corrected be:  
For, though he understands, no heed gives he.
- 20 One hasty in his words if thou dost see,  
There's hope of Fools more than of him can be.
- 21 Who doth his servant fondle from his youth,  
Sees him at last become a son, in sooth.

- 22 To stir up strife an angry man is found,  
And in transgression wrathful men abound.
- 23 A man's vain Pride shall bring him low at last;  
But he that's lowly, Honor shall hold fast.
- 24 Who shareth with a thief, himself doth hate:  
He hears the oath, yet nothing doth he state.
- 25 The fear of man creates a snare: but he  
That puts his trust in God, secure shall be.
- 26 To win the Ruler's favor many plan:  
From God the judgment comes for every man.
- 27 The Righteous loathe the man whom wrong doth  
    sway:  
The Bad abhor those upright in the way.



BOOK V.

*Shorter Collections.*

*Sayings of Agur.*

*Oracle of Lemuel's Mother.*

*Alphabetic Acrostic.*



## CHAPTER 30.

- 1 *These are the words of Agur, Jakeh's son,  
This is the Oracle by him begun;  
The man, to make a declaration led,  
Thus to Ithiel and to Ucal said:*

*The Unsearchableness of God.*

- 2 More brutish e'en than any man am I,  
For me man's understanding is too high:  
3 And Lore and Wisdom I have never gained,  
Nor knowledge of the Holy One obtained.  
4 Who scaled the heaven and came down again?  
Who in his fists the wind did gather then?  
Who hath the waters in his garment bound?  
Or, who the ends of all the earth did found?  
What is his name, and what his son's name? Deign  
To me, if thou dost know it, to explain.

*The Word of God.*

- 5 Each word of God is tried; He is, with grace,  
A shield to them that trust in Him do place:  
6 Unto His words thou shalt not add, lest He  
Find thee a liar and admonish thee.

*The Golden Mean.*

- 7 There are two things that I have asked of Thee;  
Before I die, withhold them not from me:
- 8 Put far away from me things false and vain;  
Give me not poverty nor yet great gain;  
But with the bread I need, me thou sustain:
- 9 Lest I become o'erfull, and Thee deny,  
And, "Who is God?" I tempted be to cry;  
Or I be poor, and steal, and, to my shame,  
With blasphemy profane my God's great name.
- 10 A servant to his master slander not,  
Lest thee he curse, and guilt may be thy lot.

*An Evil Generation.*

- 11 There's a class of men that e'er transgress;  
They curse their father, ne'er their mother bless.
- 12 There is a class, pure in their eyes, I ween,  
That from their filthiness are not washed clean.
- 13 There is a class—how lofty are their eyes!  
Yea, they that ever make their eyelids rise.



- 14 There is a class of men who teeth, not less  
Acute than swords, jaw-teeth, like knives, possess,  
The Poor from off the earth thus to devour,  
Consume the Needy from 'mong men each hour.

*Insatiable.*

- 15 Two daughters of the horse leech, "Give, Give," cry;  
There are three things that naught can satisfy,  
Yea, four, and each ne'er saith "Enough have I:"  
16 Sheol, and Barrenness with keen desire,  
The Earth ne'er filled with water, and the Fire  
Which doth not say, "I've all that I require."  
17 The eyes that at a father mock, the eyes  
That to obey a mother e'er despise,  
The ravens of the brook, in search of meat,  
Shall pick them out, and the young eagles eat.

*Things Unknowable.*

- 18 There are three things too wonderful for me,  
Yea, four which known by me can never be:  
19 The way of Eagles flying in the air;  
The way of Serpents on a rock that's bare;  
The way of Ships in the midst of the sea;  
Also the way of Men with maidens free.

- 20 Such of the adulterous Woman is the way:—  
She eateth, and she wipes her mouth, and “Nay,  
I’ve done no wickedness,” she dares to say.

*Intolerable.*

- 21 Under three things the earth doth tremble e’er,  
And under four which it can never bear:  
22 A Slave that is, as king, a nation’s head;  
A Worthless Fool when he is filled with bread;  
23 An Odious Woman when she’s married e’er;  
A Handmaid, too, that’s to her mistress heir.

*Little and Wise.*

- 24 Behold, four things upon the earth are small,  
And yet exceeding wise, indeed, they’re all.  
25 There are the Ants, a race not strong,—their fare  
They, therefore, in the summer time prepare;  
26 The Conies are a feeble folk,—they make  
Their houses in the rocks for safety’s sake;  
27 The Locusts have no king to give commands,  
And, therefore, all of them go forth by bands;  
28 The Lizards, with thine hands thou canst obtain,  
And in kings’ palaces a place they gain.

*Stately in Going.*

- 29 When these three march, a graceful step they show,  
Yea, these four things are stately as they go:  
30 The Lion, 'mong the beasts the mightiest,  
Which turns not back for any, e'en the best;  
31 The Greyhound; and the He-Goat; and the King  
Against whom opposition none doth bring.

*Restraining of Wrath.*

- 32 If thou in lifting up thyself hast shown  
Thy Foolishness, and hast degraded grown,  
Or evil hast devised in any way,  
Then thou thine hand upon thy mouth must lay:  
33 For lo, the milk when churned doth butter bring;  
And blood comes forth when one the nose doth  
wring;  
So, too, from forcing anger, strife doth spring.

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CHAPTER 31.

- 1 *The words that King Lemuel used to tell,—  
The oracle his mother taught him well.*

- 2 What, O my son, son of my body, yea,  
Son of my vows, to thee what shall I say?
- 3 Give not thy strength to Women, nor thy ways  
To that which ruins monarchs all their days.

*Drink.*

- 4 'Tis not for kings, Lemuel, as I think,  
'Tis not for kings in quaffing Wine to sink,  
For princes e'er to say, "Where is strong drink?"
- 5 Lest through their drinking they forget the laws,  
And of afflicted men pervert the cause.
- 6 To him that's perishing, strong drink impart,  
And Wine to him that hath a heavy heart.
- 7 Let him in drink forget his poverty,  
His misery no more remembered be.

*Protect the Weak.*

- 8 Oh, open for the dumb thy mouth, take heed  
The cause of all the desolate to plead;
- 9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and heed  
To minister judgment to the poor in need.

*Alphabetic Acrostic.**The Noble Woman.*

- 10 A Noble Woman who can find?  
More prized than rubies is her kind.
- 11 In her doth trust her husband's heart,  
And gain he lacks not on his part.
- 12 She always good, and never woes,  
Throughout her life on him bestows.
- 13 Acquiring wool and flax, doth she  
With her own hands work willingly.
- 14 She's as the Ships of merchants are;  
Her food she bringeth from afar.
- 15 She rises while it's night, and meat  
She to her household gives to eat,  
And to her maids their task complete.
- 16 The field she thinks of she obtains,  
A vineyard plants with her hands' gains.

- 17 She girds her loins with strength alway,  
And strong she makes her arms each day.
- 18 Her traffic's gain she keeps in sight:  
Her lamp is not put out by night.
- 19 Her hands she to the distaff lays,  
And in her palms the spindle stays.
- 20 With outstretched palms she gives, indeed,  
A helping hand to those in need.
- 21 Through fear of snow she's ne'er distressed;  
Her household are in scarlet dressed.
- 22 Her coverlets, too, she doth design,  
In purple robed and linen fine.
- 23 Known is her husband in each gate.  
Sitting 'mong elders of the State.
- 24 She sells the robes her hands have wrought;  
Her girdles are by merchants bought.
- 25 In strength and honor clothed is she;  
She waits the Future cheerfully.

- 26 Her mouth she opens—wisdom flows;  
Her tongue the law of kindness shows.
- 27 Her household's ways she watches e'er;  
No bread of idleness her fare.
- 28 Her children rise and call her blessed;  
Her husband, too, with praise expressed:
- 29 "Though many daughters have done well,  
Yet all of them thou dost excel."
- 30 Grace is but false, and beauty vain:  
Who fears the Lord—she praise shall gain.
- 31 Give her the fruit her hand creates;  
Let her deeds praise her in the gates.